

musée des misérables

they say that you can learn from adversity.
you can. what i learned is that there is a god,
and that he is malignant. i learned it on
a trip to the supermarket in my

miserable clunker. to drive two miles
in that atrocity of withering valves
and shameless misalignment is an
ever-renewable rite de passage. picture

then my wrath upon arriving there
with neither money nor a checkbook.
consider my dismay back on the road
as steam begins to seep from its benighted

nostrils. make it to the service station
just to scald my hand. i curse, of course,
and getting in the car i rip my pants
my only pair, because the springs are coming

through the seat. and god has both foreseen
and probably ordained the whole of it.
ah, about suffering they were never wrong,
the old comedians. they knew it happens

in a taxi or a bakery or cleaning
a chimney. and what is worse they knew it
will defeat us: the kingdom lost for a horse; the
poem for a ball-point pen; love, for a contraceptive.

sunset fats

one of my neighbors at the beach has been pestering
me for weeks to write a poem about him.

his name is joe god's truth but because he's the only
guy at the beach with a bigger beergut than mine
they call him sunset fats.

he wouldn't be a bad guy except for always saying
stupid things like telling girls he wants to
make that their hair is ratty as a coon's which
might work in the mouth of a brando or a cagney
but which doesn't get joe anything but shit on.